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“ASEAN’s Efforts in Combating Terrorism and Transnational Crime”

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First of all, I wish to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to Sony Corporation (sponsor) and the organizer of the Second Asia-Pacific Homeland Security Summit and Exposition for this opportunity to share with you the efforts of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in response to the challenges posed by international terrorism.

As you are well aware, the Al-Qaeda organization and its network and indigenous operatives continue to pose a major threat to the Southeast Asian region and the world as a whole. The recent bombing in front of the Australian Embassy in central Jakarta, Indonesia, showed this vividly. For this reason, we in ASEAN are deeply committed to combat terrorism in all its forms.

Many serious measures have been undertaken by ASEAN Member Countries in their collective efforts to cope up with the threat. I, therefore, wish to brief you on our efforts in the fight against this threat.

ASEAN Efforts in Combating Terrorism

First, I would like to bring to your attention our efforts in combating terrorism threat in ASEAN region. At the 7th ASEAN Summit on 5 November 2001 in Brunei Darussalam, the ASEAN Leaders adopted the ASEAN Declaration on Joint Action to Counter Terrorism. They viewed terrorism as a profound threat to international peace and security and "a direct challenge to the attainment of peace, progress and prosperity of ASEAN and the realization of ASEAN Vision 2020". The Leaders, thus, expressed their commitment to combat terrorism in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, other international laws and relevant UN resolutions. They also underlined that "cooperative efforts in this regard should consider joint practical counter-terrorism measures in line with specific circumstances in the region and in each member country".

This ASEAN Declaration calls for (i) the early signing of or accession to all relevant anti-terrorist conventions including the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism; (ii) forging closer cooperation among ASEAN’s front-line law enforcement agencies in combating terrorism and sharing "best practices"; (iii) enhancing intelligence exchange to facilitate the flow of information; and (iv) strengthening existing cooperation and coordination between the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime (AMMTC) and other relevant ASEAN bodies in countering terrorism. ASEAN Member Countries are encouraged to develop regional capacity building programmes to enhance their

existing capabilities to investigate, detect, monitor and report on terrorist acts.

These specific measures were incorporated in the Terrorism Component of the Work Programme adopted by the Special ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Transnational Crime in Kuala Lumpur in May 2002. The Work Programme has components, among others, on trafficking in small arms, illegal drug trafficking and money laundering. These measures were based on 6 strategic thrusts namely information exchange, cooperation in legal matters, cooperation in law enforcement matters, institutional capacity-building, training, and extra-regional cooperation.

In implementing this Work Programme, ASEAN Member Countries have carried out training programmes and projects on counter-terrorism in 2003 and 2004, which include courses on psychological operation/warfare for law enforcement officials and on intelligence procuring, bomb/explosive detection, post-blast investigation, airport security and travel document security, immigration matters and cross-border controls, and other areas of transnational crime and terrorist related matters.

ASEAN Member Countries are now working on the establishment of a regional database for disseminating information on respective national laws, regulations, bilateral and multilateral treaties or agreements of respective countries.

The Declaration of ASEAN Concord II (Bali Concord II), which was adopted at the 9th ASEAN Summit in October 2003 in Bali, envisioned three pillars of ASEAN community building: the ASEAN Economic Community, the ASEAN Security Community, and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. All the three pillars have their own Plans of Action specifying measures and activities for implementation by 2020. The Plan of Action of the ASEAN Security Community identified, among other, the possibility of establishing an ASEAN Convention on Counter-Terrorism as one of its priorities in combating terrorism in the region.

Partnership with the United States

ASEAN and the United States signed a Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism in August 2002 in Brunei Darussalam. On that occasion, an ASEAN Cooperation Plan (ACP) was adopted, aiming at enhancing the ASEAN-US relations. The three areas covered are: support for ASEAN integration, cooperation on transnational issues including terrorism, and strengthen the ASEAN Secretariat, in Jakarta, Indonesia.

The first ASEAN-US consultation on the ACP was held in Viet Nam in June 2003. An ASEAN-US Work Plan on Counter-Terrorism was endorsed in principle. It focused on information sharing, capacity building and border control.

Under the ASEAN-US work plan, the Preparatory Senior Officials Meeting on Transnational Crime (SOMTC) for the 4th AMMTC held in January 2004 in Bangkok endorsed a US inception workshop for Disaster Management project. The workshop was implemented in May 2004 in Thailand.

Besides, many ASEAN Member Countries are closely cooperating with the United States on the Container Security Initiative (CSI). It is designed to prevent the smuggling of terrorists or

weapons in ocean-going cargo containers into the USA. The Customs-Trade Partnership against Terrorism (C-TPAT) ensures that all cargoes to the US are effectively scrutinized and documented. The 24-hour Automated Manifest System (AMS) rule requires carriers to file manifest information 24 hours in advance of departure or loading.

It is important to bear in mind that whatever our individual differences with American policy, say in Afghanistan, Iraq and the Palestine conflict, we must work with the USA to combat international terrorism. The terrorists are our common enemy and there should be no distraction in countering this threat.

Multilateral Cooperation

We in ASEAN realize that in order to mobilize multilateral resources in the war against terrorism, cooperation with Dialogue Partners outside the Southeast Asian region is necessary. We have been actively working with them in various undertakings.

ASEAN is collaborating with China, Japan and the Republic of Korea under the ASEAN Plus Three process to address the threats of terrorism and transnational crimes. As follow-up to the decision of the 6th ASEAN Plus Three Summit held on 4 November 2002 in Phnom Penh, the inaugural Meeting of the AMMTC Plus Three was convened on 10 January 2004 in Bangkok, Thailand. This Meeting institutionalized AMMTC Plus Three cooperation in combating transnational crime.

The Meeting adopted a concept paper on the scope, modality, funding options and institutional arrangements for pursuing ASEAN Plus Three cooperation in combating transnational crime and agreed to use the concept paper as a basis for further developing closer ASEAN Plus Three cooperation in this field.

At the ASEAN-China Summit in Phnom Penh in November 2002, ASEAN Leaders and the Prime Minister of China issued the Joint Declaration of ASEAN and China on Cooperation in the Field of Non-Traditional Security Issues. Combating terrorism was included as one of the priorities for ASEAN-China cooperation.

ASEAN and the Ministry of Public Security of the People's Republic of China signed an MoU on the implementation of the ASEAN and China Joint Declaration on Cooperation in the Field of Non-Traditional Security Issues. Under this MoU, a 2004 Work Plan was developed with many project activities, which were successfully implemented.

ASEAN and the European Union adopted a Joint Declaration on Cooperation to Combat Terrorism during the 14th ASEAN-EU Ministerial Meeting in January 2003 in Brussels, Belgium.

ASEAN and India adopted a Joint Declaration for Cooperation to Combat Terrorism at the 9th ASEAN Summit in Bali, Indonesia in October 2003.

During the 37th ASEAN Ministerial Meeting in Jakarta in June 2004, ASEAN Foreign Ministers concluded the Joint Declarations on Cooperation to Combat International Terrorism with Russia and Australia respectively.

At the moment, ASEAN and Japan are working on a Joint Declaration on Cooperation to

Combat International Terrorism, which would be signed during the forthcoming 10th ASEAN Summit in Vientiane, next week.

While the declarations and statements have been publicized and reported in the media, the many practical actions provided under each of these frameworks have been quietly pursued/implemented. Closer cooperation is entailed and more will be rolled out in the coming months.

ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)

To sum, the three take-aways from today's lunch speech are: (i) Everyone is involved in combating international terrorism; (ii) In fighting this challenge, we are dealing with a state of mind rather than a physical nation-state; and (iii) It is better to employ local initiatives.

At the 10th ARF Ministerial Meeting in Phnom Penh in June 2003, the ARF Ministers issued the ARF Statement of Cooperative Counter-Terrorist Action on Border Security. They committed themselves to enhance their efforts in a more comprehensive manner, particularly in addressing counter-terrorism aspects of border security in the movement of people and goods.

The ARF's second Inter-sessional Meeting on Counter-Terrorism and Transnational Crime (ISM on CT-TC) was convened in Manila, on 30-31 March 2004. The Meeting recommended to Strengthening Transport Security against International Terrorism, and to take concrete and cooperative measures in safeguarding the means of transportation from terrorist threats.

At the 11th Meeting of ARF in July 2004 in Jakarta, the Ministers noted the important work being done by the ISM on CT-TC and agreed to extend its mandate for one more year, while maintaining the current format. The Ministers welcomed Canada and Thailand's offer to co-chair the next ISM on CT-TC in 2005 in Thailand.

Human Security the Best Deterrent to Terrorism

ASEAN is pro-actively engaged in mobilizing resources not only within its own region but also beyond Southeast Asia. We are looking at the larger picture, because we fully realize that international terrorism permeates all corners of the world and hence, requires a multilateral and global solution. For this reason, we are involving all the big powers which cannot be insulated from the effects of terrorist activities in our region. All countries of the world have to work together on a practical coordinated strategy for law enforcement and intelligence exchange. Likewise, there should be standardized measures such as harmonization of laws against terrorism, safeguards against money laundering as well as on travel and cargo security.

We all know that terrorism cannot be eliminated through military and police action and financial safeguards alone. Deep-seated resentment arising from social inequality, poverty and lack of opportunities serves as fuel to terrorist inclinations. This is why we strongly believe that a prosperous ASEAN, made possible through greater productivity and economic integration, is the most effective long-term measure against the danger of terrorism. Therefore, ASEAN will continue to expand its trade and investment linkages with its external partners, including the USA, so that increased economic growth and better quality of life can be obtained by more than

520 million people in ASEAN.

We are aware that many Al-Qaeda terrorists and their supporters are not economically deprived. But a peaceful and secure ASEAN where job creation, employment and the livelihood of its citizens are taken care of is the desired goal in combating all the threats to society. Such a condition will provide human security. We cannot use systems and technology alone in the counter-terrorist campaign. The support of the people is essential. Let us use technology to cope with and cure the inconveniences of terrorism, but the human factor is most important.

Conclusion

ASEAN is using its available mechanisms and resources to improve the national and regional capabilities and capacities in countering terrorism. There is no doubt that ASEAN cannot allow terrorism to threaten its development and progress.

Finally, let me say that incidents of terrorism in Southeast Asia do not make the entire region a troublesome place. There must be differentiation of Southeast Asia into its ten component countries and Timor Leste. ASEAN, as a regional organization is constructively engaged in ensuring that Southeast Asia will not be so tarnished by one brush stroke.

Thank you.